

Emil Zátopek. Competitor at three Olympic Games: London 1948, Helsinki 1952, and Melbourne four years later. Winner of four gold and one silver Olympic medals. Three-time European champion, Czechoslovak national champion 15 times. He broke 61 Czechoslovak and 18 world records. The best athlete in the world in the years 1949 and 1952; the best runner in the world between 1948 and 1954. His most successful distance was the 5,000 metres. In the years 1945-1954 he was eight-time national champion over this distance. In May 1954 he broke the world record with a time of 13:57.2.

In 1948 he started running the 10,000 metres and reigned supreme for six years. He was top of the world rankings in the years 1948 to 1954; he improved the world record five times, won at this distance at the Olympics twice (in 1948 and 1952), and was European champion in 1950 and 1954. In June 1954 in Brussels, he was the first person ever to run the 10,000 metres in under 29 minutes (28:54.2). He also achieved exceptional performances over longer distances: 20,000 metres (59:51.8), 30,000 metres (1:35:23) and the marathon (2:23:03).

Emil Zátopek was a true inspiration, both on and off the track. For many Czechs a symbol of resilience through the challenging cold war years and the first athlete to add intensity to his training programme which saw him win the 5,000m, 10,000m and marathon at the same Olympic Games in Helsinki 1952. Simply he was an extraordinary runner and inspirational man.

Sebastian Coe,
double Olympic champion, and European champion

I won Olympic golds in the 5,000m and 10,000m in London in 2012 but could not have imagine running the marathon as well. I don't think we will ever see his feat repeated in a future Olympic Games. Zátopek was also the first person to break 29 minutes for the 10,000m.

Mohammed "Mo" Farah,
double Olympic champion and four-time world champion.

28:54,2

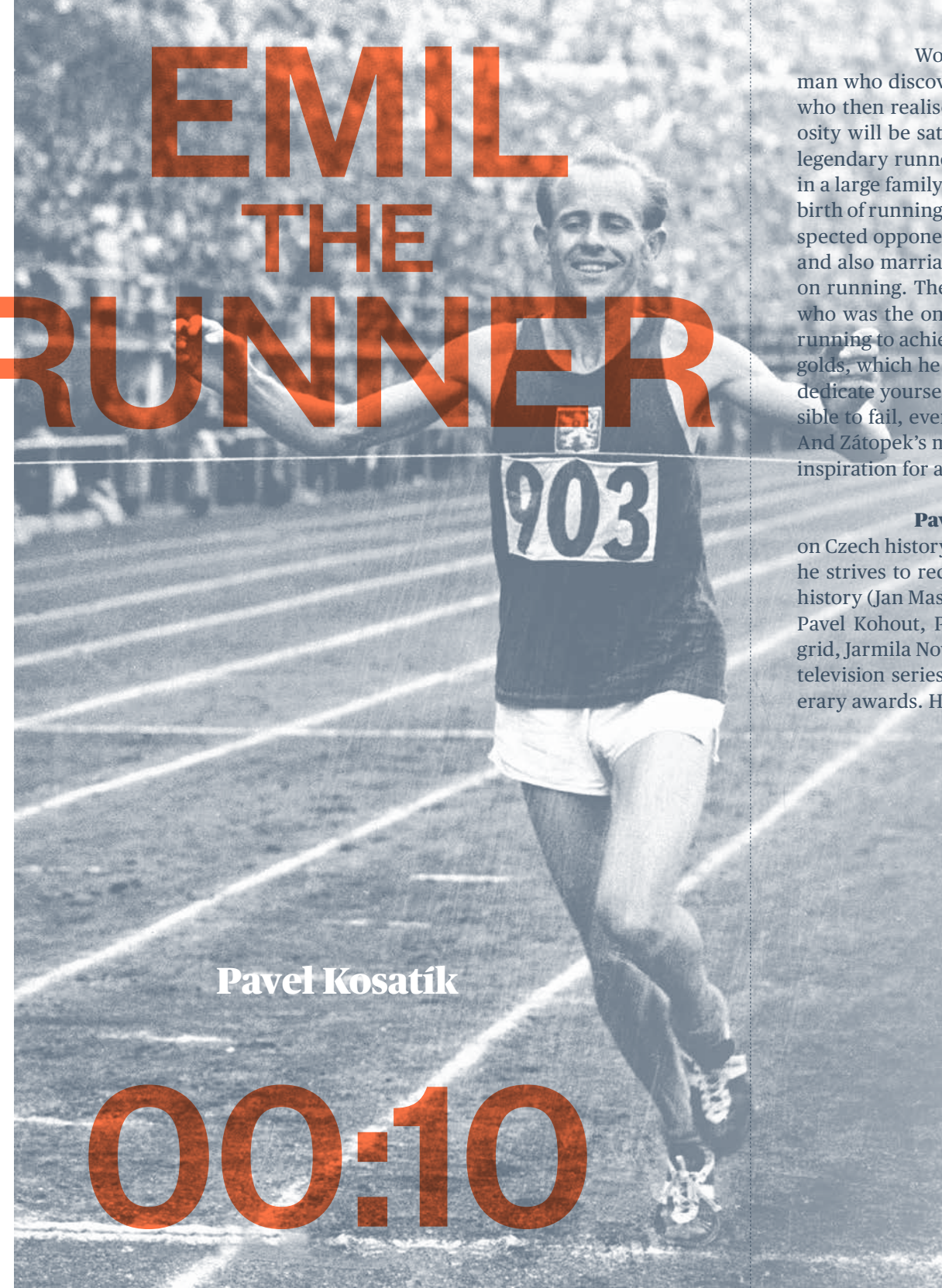
1. 6. 1954, Brussels, world record in the 10,000 metres



EMIL THE RUNNER

Pavel Kosatík

EMIL THE RUNNER



Pavel Kosatík

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Would you like to learn about the life of a man who discovered what it was he was born to be, and who then realised this potential in full? If so, your curiosity will be satisfied by the first complete biography of legendary runner Emil Zátopek. It tells of his childhood in a large family, his youth in the "Baťa town" of Zlín, the birth of running as a sport in the Czech lands; it recalls respected opponents and friends, the army and discipline, and also marriage and politics; but most of all it focuses on running. The book is a reminder of the life of a man who was the only athlete in the history of international running to achieve the long-distance hat trick of Olympic golds, which he did in 1952. It is confirmation that if you dedicate yourself 100 per cent to something it is not possible to fail, even if you don't actually win Olympic gold. And Zátopek's motto "Can't do it? Try harder!" is also an inspiration for all us amateur runners.

Pavel Kosatík (born 1962), author of books on Czech history (for the most part biographies) in which he strives to reconstruct a certain phase in the nation's history (Jan Masaryk, Ferdinand Peroutka, Olga Havlová, Pavel Kohout, Přemysl Pitter, Věra Čáslavská, Pavel Tigrid, Jarmila Novotná and others). A screen writer for the television series České století, and recipient of many literary awards. He enjoys running in the Brdy forests.